

## Which School for my Deaf Child

Choosing a school can be difficult for parents and children and in Norfolk there are several options, and for a deaf child lots of things for you to consider. The following information will help you to ask the necessary questions and give you some guidance on what to look for.

There are three main choices of schooling for deaf children.

- Mainstream – this is usually your local school where your child is on the register as any other child. The County Education Sensory Support Service may give the school and/or your child extra support as appropriate. This can vary from an initial visit to the school to prepare staff, to regular weekly visits and one to one support with your child.
- Units for Deaf Children – In Norwich there are currently three schools which have units or resource bases specifically for deaf children. A teacher of the deaf is based in these schools. Your child will be on the register of the school as any other child, but support will be given on a daily basis by the teacher of the deaf and trained support workers. This can vary from one to one support in the resource base to communication support in the main class.
- Residential School for the Deaf – There are no special schools for deaf children in Norfolk, however if it was deemed appropriate that your deaf child's needs would be best met in a school for deaf children then the local education authority will pay for your child to reside there. The majority of deaf children board during the week, coming home at weekends.

The County Education Sensory Support Service have teachers of the deaf in the west of the county, based in Kings Lynn. In the east, based in Gt Yarmouth and centrally based in Norwich.

They have a team of peripatetic teachers of the deaf who visit the family home to work with pre-school deaf children and who visit mainstream schools

## **What to do when looking for a school**

- Ask for the School's prospectus and Special Educational Needs Policy, this will give you a 'feel' for the school and it should indicate what experience they have had of children with special needs.
- Visit the School and see if they have an open day coming up. If not contact them and make an appointment to visit. If you feel you did not see everything you wanted, go back and make another visit.
- Take your child on a visit to the school, it is important to involve your child as much as possible.
- Find out if the school have had deaf children before or if the staff have had any deaf awareness training.
- Before you visit the school think of the questions you want to ask and have them written down. The National Deaf Children's Society have produced a very good list of questions to ask when visiting a school which can be obtained from us or NDCS direct.
- You may want to ask other parents of children at the school what they think about the school but please bear in mind that people will have different views depending on their experiences.

**Deaf Connexions produces a range of information sheets covering all aspects of hearing loss and deafness. If you would like further information contact :**

Deaf Connexions

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